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Career
Opportunities
in the



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DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

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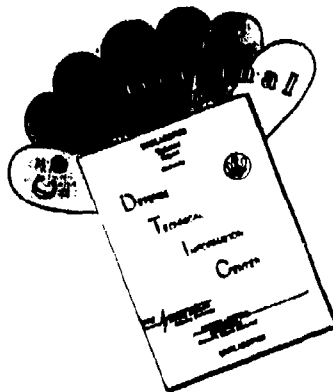
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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) An informational and recruiting pamphlet that explains the most important provisions of the November 1990 Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). Contains summaries of the law's implementing rules and policies, and cites the most applicable references. The pamphlet is intended for members of the DoD acquisition workforce and for others attracted to career opportunities in Defense acquisition.				
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ACQUISITION

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON DC 20301 3000

This pamphlet has been prepared for members of the DoD acquisition workforce and for others interested in the many opportunities that a career in acquisition can offer. It explains the most important provisions of our implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) and addresses areas of interest and concern to you, our valued employee. I trust that you will find this information helpful in planning your future.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Yockey".

Don Yockey

The Acquisition Workforce

Recent changes in Federal law and in DoD guidance are bringing more centralized management and more professional development, education, training, and career opportunities to the acquisition workforce. The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), signed into law in November 1990, is having a major impact upon the DoD acquisition community, and especially upon those seeking opportunities to move into higher positions in acquisition. The new law has brought about new definitions for DoD acquisition positions.

A-1

Acquisition Positions

Acquisition Positions:

Civilian positions and military billets that are in the DoD acquisition system, have acquisition duties, and fall in an acquisition position category established by the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition). While most frequently located in organizations having an acquisition mission, acquisition positions are also located in management headquarters organizations, management headquarters support organizations, and other organizations.
(DoDD 5000.52, 25 Oct 91)

Acquisition Position Categories:

Functional subsets of acquisition positions. There are 14 Acquisition position categories: Program management; Program management oversight; Communications-computer systems; Contracting (to include contracting for construction); Purchasing (to include procurement assistant); Industrial property management; Business, cost estimating and financial management; Auditing; Quality assurance; Manufacturing and production; Acquisition logistics; Systems planning, research, development and engineering; Test and evaluation engineering; Education, training, and career development.
(DoD 5000.52-M, 19 Nov 91)

Acquisition position categories, career fields, and functions are identified only by their relationship to acquisition work. If, for example, a position in an acquisition program is entitled "Program Manager," that position would be an acquisition position, and the person occupying that position would be a member of the acquisition workforce. If, by contrast, the position of "Program Manager" were that of a personnel program leader with no acquisition duties, the position would not be designated as an acquisition position, and the incumbent would not be a member of the acquisition workforce.



Acquisition Corps

The law requires that we identify a distinct group of acquisition professionals to lead the acquisition workforce. These people make up the Acquisition Corps:

Acquisition Corps: A subset of a DoD Component's acquisition workforce, composed of select military and civilian personnel in grades of Lieutenant Commander, Major, General Schedule and/or General Manager (GS/GM) 13, and above, who are acquisition professionals. There is one Acquisition Corps for each Military Department and one for all other DoD Components (including the OSD and the Defense Agencies). (DoDD 5000.52, 25 Oct 91)

The DoD Acquisition Corps, then, is subdivided by service into four separate groups or corps of acquisition managers and leaders who meet special professional standards and are thereby offered unique opportunities.

To be qualified for certification as a member of one of the Corps, you must:

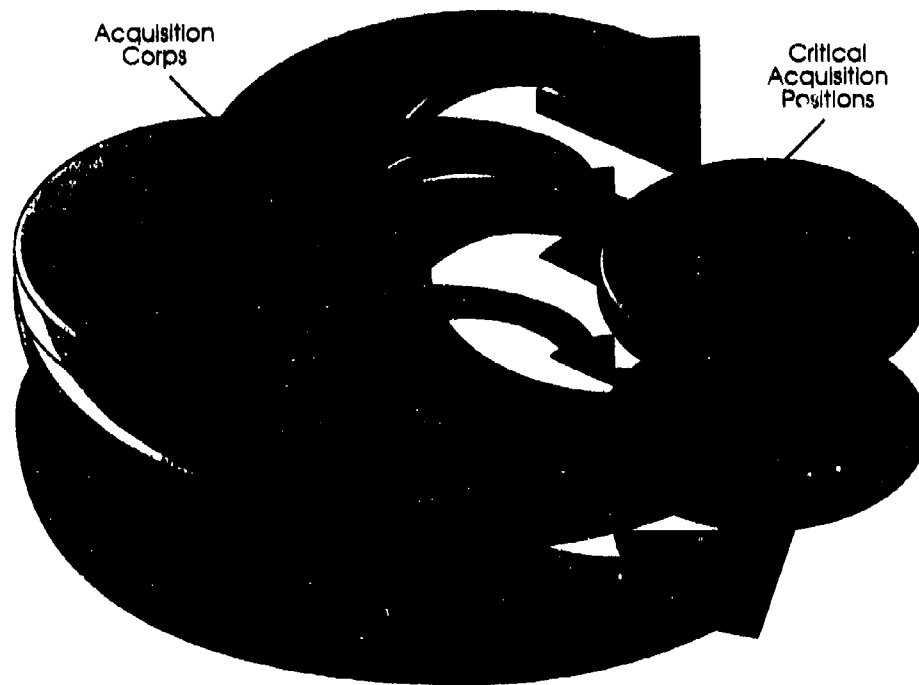
- Be a civilian employee in the grade of GS/GM 13 or above, or a military member in the grade of O4 or above

- Have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university or be certified by the appropriate career program board to have significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority, based on demonstrated capabilities, job performance, and experience.
- Have at least 24 semester credit hours for their equivalent of your college education from among these disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and organization and management...OR have at least 12 credit hours in these disciplines and 24 credit hours in your career field.
- Have at least 4 years' experience in an acquisition position.
- Be qualified in any additional ways required for Corps membership by the Secretary of your Military Department.

Civilian employees who are members of one of the four Acquisition Corps become automatically qualified as members of another Acquisition Corps when selected to fill critical acquisition positions in that other DoD Component. Military personnel remain members of the Acquisition Corps of their respective Military Departments even when assigned to positions in other DoD Components.

Critical Acquisition Positions

Among all the positions to be designated as acquisition positions under the new regulations, the most important positions are to be designated as critical acquisition positions.

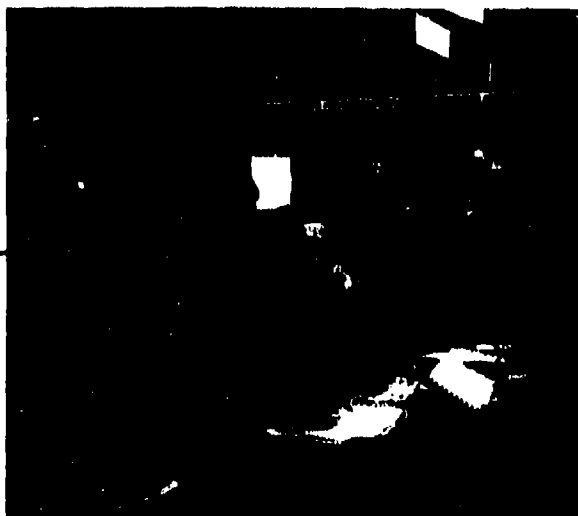


Critical Acquisition Position. These senior positions carrying significant responsibility primarily involving supervisory or management duties in the DoD acquisition system. These positions are designated by the Secretary of Defense, based on the recommendations of the DoD Component Acquisition Executives, and include any acquisition position required to be filled by an employee in the grade of GS/GM 14 or above, or military grade O-5, or above. Also specifically includes all Program Executive Officers, the Deputy Program Executive Officers, the Program Managers and the Deputy Program Managers for major defense acquisition programs, and the Program Managers of significant nonmajor programs (DoDD 5000.52, 25 Oct 91)

These critical positions will be managed intensively and, by 1 October 1993, may be filled only by members of the Acquisition Corps.

So whether you are a civilian employee or a military member of the DoD family – and whether your interest or experience lies in program management, contracting, engineering, or in one of nine other fields – the Acquisition Corps may offer you just the future you've been seeking.

Corps members are tomorrow's leaders in the continuing work of developing, buying, delivering, and sustaining the materials required for our national defense.



Education, Training, and Career Development

In order to maintain the very highest professional standards among the men and women of the acquisition workforce, requirements in education, training, and experience have been established for every kind of acquisition position. The requirements are based on the complexities of the job and are listed in DoD 5000.52-M, **Career Development Program for Acquisition Personnel**, 19 November 1991. The requirements are explained even more fully in DoDI 5000.58, **Defense Acquisition Workforce**, 14 January 1992. Requirements that are specific to the Acquisition Corps of any Military Department are listed in that Department's implementing guidance.

Additional, specific requirements now exist for some special kinds of critical acquisition positions:

- *Contracting officers with authority to award or administer contracts for amounts above the "small purchase threshold"*
- *Program executive officers*
- *Program Managers of major defense acquisition programs*
- *Deputy Program Managers of major defense acquisition programs*
- *General and flag officers and civilians in equivalent positions*
- *Senior contracting officials.*

Opportunities

Civilian and military personnel who make acquisition a career have the potential opportunity to qualify for:

- Attendance at basic, intermediate, and advanced acquisition training, including selection for the Senior Acquisition Course at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces
- Advanced undergraduate and graduate college and university study
- A clearly defined career path with training, education, and experience levels identified

- Certification as an acquisition manager
- Competition for critical acquisition positions
- Service in the most prestigious and demanding positions in acquisition.

If all this sounds attractive to you, see your supervisor or career program advisor after reading this pamphlet. They can provide additional information of special interest to you.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

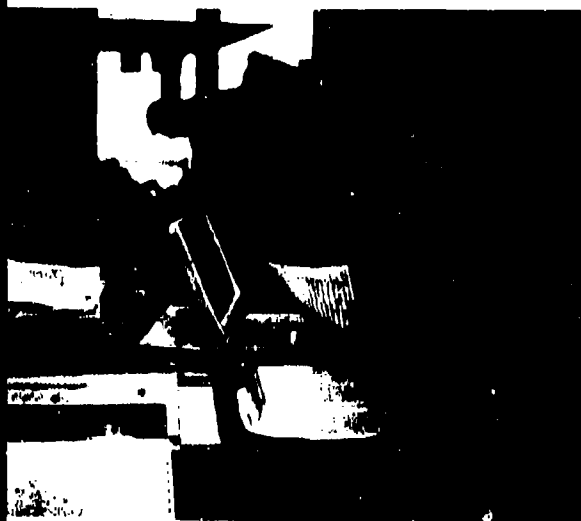
The Acquisition Workforce

Q: How does DoD determine whether my position is an acquisition position? Who makes that decision?

A: The procedures for that review are detailed in DoDI 5000.58, 14 January 1992. Members of your chain of command ultimately decide whether your position is an acquisition position, based on guidance contained in the DoDI.

Q: If my present position is designated an acquisition position, how will that affect my DoD career?

A: The designation of your position as an acquisition position makes you a member of the acquisition workforce. For as long as you have held the job and served in this and other acquisition positions, you have been gaining valuable work experience toward meeting the experience requirements that lead toward positions of greater responsibility. You also become eligible to receive required education, training, or experience that will sharpen the skills and abilities you need for your present position. Finally, you become a member of the acquisition "community," a group of professionals with established paths of education, training, and experience throughout their careers.



Q: Who is responsible for ensuring that all the right experience and qualification documents are maintained in my personnel file?

A: The military and civilian personnel offices are responsible for maintaining these kinds of records, but you have a personal responsibility to see that your file is accurate and complete.

Q: What grades are included in each career level?

A: Career levels are not necessarily linked to grades. While they may vary by career field and position, there are generally close relationships between grades and levels.

Q: Who is responsible for the development of DoD acquisition career policy?

A: The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition is responsible. Policy is implemented through the Office of the Director, Acquisition Education, Training, and Career Development.

Q: I supervise a DoD employee who has a contracting warrant. Does this mean that my position is an acquisition position?

A: No, not necessarily. While this is often true, the status of your particular position depends on all the duties and responsibilities of your job..

The Acquisition Corps

Q: I am interested in a career in DoD acquisition work. What could membership in the Acquisition Corps mean for me?

A: Acquisition Corps membership means opportunities for training, education, and advancement. Tell your supervisor or your personnel officer about your interest in becoming a Corps member. Find out what is required, based on your current career status. In addition to your supervisor and personnel officer, the publications listed on the inside back cover of this pamphlet will give you valuable information.

Q: I am occupying a position that has been designated an acquisition position. Does this mean I am a member of the Acquisition Corps?

A: No, the question of Corps membership requires a separate review of your qualifications. Being in an acquisition position does mean that you are part of the acquisition workforce.

Q: Will becoming a member of the Acquisition Corps improve my chances of promotion?

A: Meeting the standards for Acquisition Corps membership is a necessary step toward becoming competitive for assignment or promotion to any critical acquisition position.

Q: Will I receive some notification telling me that I have become a member of the Acquisition Corps?

A: Yes. The DoD Instruction covering that action (DoDI 5000.55, **Reporting Management Information on DoD Military and Civilian Acquisition Personnel and Positions**, 1 November 1991) contains a suggested admission certificate, DD Form 2587, but each DoD Component has the right to use other documentation.

Q: I have a number of questions about acquisition career programs and about the Acquisition Corps. Whom should I contact?

A: Use your chain of command, beginning with your supervisor. Include your career program advisor among those you question.

Q: Does membership in one Acquisition Corps qualify me for membership in the other three?

A: Yes, there is full reciprocity among the Acquisition Corps: Army, Navy/Marine Corps, Air Force, and OSD/Defense Agencies.

Q: How do I apply for membership in the Acquisition Corps?

A: All three Military Departments and the Office of the Secretary of Defense are publishing separate procedures for membership consideration in one of the four Acquisition Corps. Supervisors and career program advisors will be able to give you specific information as it becomes available.

Q: What is the Acquisition Corps central referral system and how do I get into the system?

A: Each Acquisition Corps has its own central referral system. Each system allows the members of that Corps to learn of and compete for critical positions, without geographic or other restrictions. Participation by individuals is voluntary. Contact your personnel officer for the procedures that apply in your Component.

Q: How will the "centralized referral" of civilians work? Could I be excluded from consideration for a position if I am not in the centralized referral system?

A: Central referral lets you find out about, and apply for, critical acquisition positions everywhere. There are four systems, one in each Military Department and one for OSD and the Defense Agencies, and you may register in any or all of them.

Critical Acquisition Positions

Q: Will all acquisition positions require occupancy by Acquisition Corps members?

A: No, only critical acquisition positions will carry that requirement.

Q: Can acquisition workers from outside DoD apply for DoD critical acquisition positions?

A: Yes. Applicants from outside DoD are not excluded from consideration. Applicants are reviewed on their personal qualifications.

Q: What is the rotational review and how does it work?

A: The review is conducted only for critical acquisition positions, and only for those critical positions occupied by the same person for five consecutive years. The purpose of the review is to determine if it is in the interest of the Government and the individual to bring about a reassignment. Any resulting reassignment will be handled according to already existing personnel policies.

Q: My job has been designated a critical acquisition position, but I am not sure I want to become a member of the Acquisition Corps. What would be best for me to do?

A: Begin with a review of your options. You may remain in your present position without becoming a member of the Acquisition Corps, since the Department of Defense has decided to "grandfather" all incumbents in critical positions. As you continue to serve in your present job, you may discover attractive advantages to becoming a Corps member. Promotion into another critical acquisition position, for example, requires Corps membership.

Written Agreements

Q: Certain positions require that a minimum length of time be spent occupying the position. Will these rules prevent me from being promoted? From changing positions?

A: These rules apply only to critical acquisition positions. In most cases, the incumbent must agree to serve in that job for at least three years before moving on. But for Program Managers and Deputy Program Managers of major defense acquisition programs, the minimum required time in the position is about four years, depending on the program's development and production milestones. None of these rules will prevent or postpone your promotion. But, since the intent of the rules is to bar an incumbent from lateral changes of positions or leaving Federal service (active duty) before the end of the minimum-service period, these requirements may have an effect on your changing positions. Length-of-assignment waivers are possible only under one of three kinds of exceptional circumstances: promotion of the incumbent, humanitarian reasons, and in the interest of the Government. The intent and the effect of the rules are to bring more stability to the most important acquisition positions.

Q: I am occupying a critical acquisition position and have signed an agreement to remain for three years. At the end of that time, will I be able to apply for reassignment to a nonacquisition position?

A: Yes, you may be considered for reassignment to any position for which you are qualified.

Q: When might DoD order an involuntary geographic reassignment - that is, moving a civilian employee who does not want to relocate to another area?

A: To provide a tool for matching people with jobs, the law authorizes the Secretary of Defense to require civilian members of the Acquisition Corps to sign mobility agreements. Ordinarily, the issue of mandatory reassignment will come up only in cases where an employee has occupied the same critical acquisition position for more than five years. Even then, geographic relocation is less desirable than reassignment to a new job in the same area. Involuntary relocation is the least desirable solution. Relocation is never to be used as disciplinary action.



Grandfathering

Q: What is "grandfathering"? How do I know whether I am covered by any of the grandfathering provisions of the new law?

A: "Grandfathering" provisions are the exceptions that protect incumbents during the transition to the Acquisition Corps. The provisions for grandfathering under the new law are shown below and are included in DoDI 5000.58, 14 January 1992.

Q: I have been informed that my present position is a critical acquisition position and that I have been "grandfathered" for qualification to hold this job. Will this grandfathering be good for the rest of my career?

A: If your personal education and experience background has led your DoD Component to declare you to be fully qualified to hold your present position, whether or not that qualification is based on having been "grandfathered" or on equivalencies or waivers, that qualification will continue as long as you hold that job. Of course, as you seek advancement to positions of increasing responsibility, you will need to meet the standards set for those higher positions.

Exceptions "grandfathering"

- Contracting Officers and GS-1102s who are serving on 1 October 1991, need not meet the education, training, or experience standards for Contracting Officers and GS-1102s to continue to serve in such positions or other positions at the same grade level.
- Employees who on 1 October 1991, had at least 10 years' experience in acquisition positions
 - Need never meet the education standards to be Contracting Officers or to be in the GS-1102 series. [§1731(c)(1) re: §1724(a)(3) and (b)]
 - Need never meet the education standards for admission to an Acquisition Corps. [§1731(c)(1) re: §1732(b)(2)]
- Employees who were in acquisition positions on 1 October 1991, and had less than 10 years' acquisition experience may meet the education standards for entrance into an Acquisition Corps by equivalence testing. [§1732(c)(2) re: §1732(b)(2)]
- An employee serving a critical acquisition position on 1 October 1992, may continue to serve in such position without being a member of an Acquisition Corps or meeting the statutory standards for PMs, deputy PMs, PEOs, Senior Contracting Officials, or Flag/SES. [§1736(c)(1) re: §1733(a) and §1735(a)-(e)]
- A PM (ACAT I or ACAT II) serving on 1 October 1991, may continue to serve in such position without being a member of an Acquisition Corps or meeting the statutory standards for PMs. [§1736(c)(2) re: §1733(a) and §1735(a) and (b)]

Waivers

Q: Can the requirements of the new law be waived?

A: Yes, in many cases. Some of the requirements of DAWIA are not hard and fast. All of the waivers possible are described in Appendix L to DoD 5000.52-M, **Career Development Program for Acquisition Personnel**, 19 November 1991.

Education and Training

Q: I am a member of the acquisition workforce occupying an acquisition position. How do I find out what acquisition training I need, and how do I go about enrolling in those mandatory courses?

A: First, consult DoD 5000.52-M, **Career Development Program for Acquisition Personnel**, 19 November 1991. That manual will inform you of the training standards for your career level, position category, and career field, and will provide general information about career development policies. Next, consult any guidance your Component has issued to implement the DoD manual; the guidance will contain any requirements that are unique to your Component. Then meet with your supervisor to work out an Individual Development Plan (see pp. 1-3 through 1-6 of DoD 5000.52-M). Your supervisor should then work with local training officials to schedule you for the training you need.

Q: What are the new educational standards, and when are they effective?

A: The educational standards for Corps membership shown on page 5 of this brochure are effective 1 October 1993. In addition, new educational requirements have been established (effective 1 October 1993) for contracting positions. Contracting Officers and GS-1102s must:

a. Have received a bachelor's degree from an accredited educational institution authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees, or

b. Have completed at least 24 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) of study from an accredited institution of higher education in any of the following disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and organization and management, or

c. Have passed an examination considered by the Secretary of Defense to demonstrate skills, knowledge, or abilities comparable to that of an individual who has completed at least 24 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) of study from an accredited institution of higher education in any of the following disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

Q: I am a member of the Acquisition Corps. Will DoD pay for my baccalaureate or master's degree program?

A: The new law does contain some pay-for-degree provisions, and the Office of Personnel Management has issued regulations implementing those provisions. In that context, acquisition positions are declared "critical" until the year 2001. See your personnel officer to learn how to apply for tuition assistance provided for in DAWIA.

Q: I am occupying a Level II position, as defined in DoD 5000.52-M. Must I complete training required for the corresponding Level I position?

A: No. You are required to meet only the training standards for the position you now occupy

Q: I occupy a position in one career field but want to take training associated with another field. May I?

A: Yes, but you will receive a lower attendance priority than the priority of people who require that training for their current jobs.

Q: To improve my competitiveness, should I seek training associated with the next higher career level?

A: Yes, it is to your advantage to get that training. It may be difficult, because some people requiring the training will be scheduled ahead of you. Do not be discouraged; keep trying.

Q: Must I attend mandatory training if scheduled to go?

A: Yes, training is important, and mandatory training is especially important to you personally. An assignment to training is like any other work assignment.

Q: May I receive mandatory training credit for college courses I have taken? If so, how?

A: Yes, successful completion of some courses may help establish your competency in certain areas. Working with your supervisor, complete a DDForm 2518 (p.2-6, DoD 5000.52-M) to start a proper review of the college courses and other experiences that might qualify for mandatory training credit. Certain college courses are already recognized as being equivalent to some DoD mandatory training courses. Consult the latest Defense Acquisition University catalog for specifics.

Q: I am not a member of the Acquisition Corps, but because of my Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) duties, I need several acquisition courses. May I take them?

A: Yes, but your attendance priority must be weighed against the priority of other careerists who have mandatory training requirements.



Relationships Among Acquisition Functions, Position Categories, and Career Fields

Function	Position Category	Career Field
Business, Cost Estimating, and Financial Management	Business, Cost Estimating, and Financial Management	Business, Cost Estimating, and Financial Management
Auditing	8. Auditing	Auditing
Production	9. Manufacturing and Production	Manufacturing and Production
	10. Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance
Acquisition Logistics	11. Acquisition Logistics	Acquisition Logistics
Science and Engineering	12. Systems Planning, Research, Development, and Engineering	Systems Planning, Research, Development, and Engineering
	13. Test and Evaluation Engineering	Test and Evaluation Engineering
	14. Education, Training, and Career Development	

References

- Sections 1201 through 1211 of Public Law 101-510, 5 November 1990; also known as the **Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act**; also known as Chapter 87 of Title 10, U.S. Code, plus miscellaneous implementing provisions affecting other titles of the U.S. Code and cited in above sections of PL 101-510.
- DoD Directive 5000.52, **Defense Acquisition Education, Training, and Career Development Program**, 25 October 1991.
- DoD Directive 5000.57, **Defense Acquisition University**, 22 October 1991.
- DoD Instruction 5000.55, **Reporting Management Information on DoD Military and Civilian Acquisition Personnel and Positions**, 1 November 1991.
- DoD Instruction 5000.58 **Defense Acquisition Workforce**, 14 January 1992.
- DoD 5000.52-M, **Career Development Program for Acquisition Personnel**, 19 November 1991.

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